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ABSTRACT

A project was conducted to determine problems or barriers prohibiting awarding credit for Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) training in Virginia. Potential solutions and strategies for their implementation were to be identified. A variety of methods were used to obtain information required to produce a Plan of Action that presents leaders in CETA and educational settings with activities that would result in increased awarding of academic credit for CETA training. These included a literature review, national survey to identify institutions that had in place implementation strategies for awarding credit for CETA training, a statewide workshop involving CETA and educational leaders, and site visits involving CETA training activities at secondary and postsecondary levels. Problems/issues with both indirect and direct impact were identified and solutions suggested. Those that appeared to have greatest impact were organized into these categories: (1) authority and curriculum, (2) funding, (3) administration, and (4) attitudes and communications. A plan of action incorporated recommendations both for state level actions for attacking the most generalized problems, developing guidelines, and providing a clearinghouse for information about successes in the field and local actions for colleges, schools, and CETA agencies to work on specific problems and implement procedures for immediate results in local settings. (YLB)

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# AWARDING EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR CETA TRAINING:

# A PLAN OF ACTION

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CONTENTS


Page

Foreword . . . . . ii

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1

Purpose of the Project 5

Data Collection 6

2. PROBLEMS & THEIR SOLUTIONS: AWARDING ACADEMIC CREDIT . . .10

Problems With Indirect Impact on Awarding of Credit. . .10

Problems Having Direct Impact on Awarding of Credit. . .16

Authority and Curriculum . . . . . .16

Authority to Grant Credity . . . . . .17

Difficulty in Determining Equivalency . . . . . 17

Differences in Teacher Certification and Facilities . . 19

Failure to Recognize Alternative Educational Programs . 20

Funding . . . . . 21

Administration . . . . . .22

Time in Programs . . . . . .23

Admissions Standards. . . . . 23

Loss of Students . . . . . .24

Attitudes and Communications. . . . . 25

3. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: A PLAN OF ACTION. . . . . .27

Recommendations for Action . . . . . .29

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . .34

## Foreword

Unnecessary duplication of effort by students who aspire to the successes offered by both effective job training and academic credentials represents a substantial waste of human potential--a waste that is rampant today. The tragedy is seen in years of productive potential lost by both youth and adults who remain in programs long after they have learned the required skills in previous programs or jobs and in lives of productive participation lost by those who just give up in disgust rather than repeat programs to get the credentials which open doors to jobs and success. There is no greater waste than that of a person's time and that waste is the focus of this Plan of Action.

The current pattern of CETA training, much of which is clearly equivalent to that offered by public and private secondary and post-secondary schools, and its lack of recognition by those educational agencies and institutions, represents a major example of wasted human potential. Many, though probably not all, of the programs offered under the auspices of CETA deserve recognition for their equivalency and merit academic credit. However, for many reasons, that recognition frequently does not occur and CETA training program completers who later pursue diplomas or degrees in colleges and schools must start all over regardless of similarity of programs. The aim of this Plan of Action is to encourage the leaders of CETA agencies and educational agencies and institutions in Virginia to move quickly to eliminate the years of wasted potential through integrated efforts to increase the awarding of academic credit for CETA training in a variety of settings. The plan does not include proposals that credit be granted for all CETA programs; nor does it include proposals of only one mode for the conduct of training and the administration of credit. Institutions, agencies, prime sponsors, and others will have to work together to develop what

seems to work best in their particular region. Perhaps one mode will predominate in the future, but in the meantime this Plan of Action describes solutions and strategies to make major achievements in a variety of settings.

The recommendations that are presented at the conclusion of this plan are based on observations of successful efforts in both public and private secondary schools and colleges in and out of Virginia and on suggestions from the literature and the practitioners who participated in various phases of the project. Though they are not complicated or especially difficult to implement, their acceptance and implementation are dependent upon key leaders in all sections becoming committed to the need to award credit for CETA training and then setting about the task of making that a reality. Perhaps Virginia will provide leadership for much of the nation in yet another major educational endeavor.

## Chapter I

## INTRODUCTION

During the 1970's, high unemployment rates, particularly among youth, led to increased Federal awareness of the need to address this problem. The passage of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) represent major efforts to respond to the problems of unemployment and underemployment among the nation's youth and adults, especially the disadvantaged. Included in the program activities of the CETA/YEDPA legislation are opportunities for extensive involvement of the education community.

Following passage of the legislation, the U.S. Department of Labor and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare began to work together on goals of the new legislation and to facilitate cooperation between the two departments to (a) provide descriptions and legal information to educators and CETA prime sponsors; (b) support CETA and local education agency (LEA) agreements; (c) identify new models for work-education programs; (d) ensure program quality by establishing procedures for credit to be granted for relevant work experience; (e) assess institutional change and alternative approaches in work-education programs; and (f) improve career and occupational information.

The 1978 rewrite of the legislation further fostered the development of cooperative efforts between schools and CETA programs. The "Final Rule" for implementation of the legislation included provisions for increased efforts to establish linkages with educational agencies. Specifically, funds are to be provided to encourage coordination and establish linkages between prime sponsors

and appropriate educational agencies and institutions. Those funds may be used for activities such as: (1) developing agreements between prime sponsors and State Boards of Vocational Education and state or local educational agencies or institutions of higher education; (2) establishing mechanisms to increase information exchange between prime sponsors and educational agencies and institutions; (3) developing and disseminating models of linkages; (4) providing information, curriculum materials and technical assistance in curriculum and staff development to prime sponsors; (5) providing assistance in development of systems for assessment and testing the educational attainment of participants in prime sponsor programs; and (6) providing assistance to eliminate barriers in the educational system which hamper employment and training activities such as the development of open-entry/open-exit courses and academic credit for CETA training.

Among the most troubling issues related to collaboration between CETA programming and educational institutions is the award of academic credit. Academic credit is the "rate of exchange" in our society's use of various levels of certification for measures of success and qualification for employment. Program completion and graduation are so inextricably related with success that training programs which result in attainment of necessary job skills but without academic credit remain second rate in long term value to the student.

The fact that we are a credentialing society is apparent. These individuals with appropriate credentials receive the most attractive jobs and the high social status that accompanies them. Thus, many workers are locked out of society's reward system, not because they lack the skills to perform a job adequately, but because they lack credentials afforded by traditional educational programs. While tradition provides a monopoly on awarding credit to schools and colleges, it may be time to accelerate efforts to recognize alternative educational opportunities.

In 1979, half a million people went from CETA to unsubsidized jobs, most entering private employment. However, many of these workers received training that was not recognized by the educational community in terms of awarding educational credit. In many instances, it was the same kind of training for which students enrolled in secondary and post-secondary institutions had received certificates, diplomas, and academic degrees. Recognizing that there is a duplication of training, CETA has responded to the need for cooperation with educational agencies and has, in fact, written into its guidelines for prime sponsors a mandate to describe arrangements with schools and collegs for awarding credit.

While this mandate to develop policies regarding credit is commendable and represents a first step toward solving the problem of awarding credit, it does not address the political and attitudinal problems that arise when independent agencies must work together to achieve a goal. In this instance, CETA must acquaint itself with not only state policy, but also local policy governing the awarding of educational credit. Public school districts as well as post-secondary institutions have autonomy in developing and granting credit in keeping with state policy guidelines. One of the problems then is the establishment of a network of communications for the development of policy and procedures mutually acceptable to both the educational and the CETA communities.

Much has been said about the need to avoid duplication of effort and waste of student time. Lack of credit for CETA training forces students to repeat work at a school or college to gain credit. For this reason, there is a need for policies concerning the recognition of learning relating to a secondary school diploma, a post-secondary degree, or an accredited certificate of completion. One of the questions that arises in the awarding of any kind of credit for learning is, who will grant the credit? By tradition, the awarding of

credit has been the province of educators, and educators have guarded their rights and responsibilities in this area with extreme caution. Some educators are opposed to granting recognition for nontraditional learning such as CETA training. This opposition in part, stems from academic tradition that preserves education for the elite. Those in control of educational credentialing often resist giving legitimacy to nontraditional programs. At the same time, there is a resistance to innovative education that takes place outside the traditional classroom setting and instruction that is delivered by persons who are not credentialed according to the standards established by the educational system.

Besides the protection of turf by educators, there is the inclination on the part of local school boards as well as college governing boards to resist mandates by the federal government. Additional sources of funds from any level of government are difficult for the educational community to resist, yet any manipulation of education on the part of the federal government is a source of antagonism which tends to create a barrier toward cooperation, especially if it threatens loss of autonomy in deciding who will be credentialed by the educational system.

While it is easy to criticize educators who are reluctant to accept the idea of awarding credit for education outside the traditional classroom, there may be some justification for their resistance. For much of that training, including many CETA programs, the outcomes are difficult to identify. Some vocational training programs are functioning without specific and identifiable educational objectives. Though these programs may be operating effectively, secondary and post-secondary institutions are hesitant to award credit without identifiable program objectives that give some evidence of quality commensurate with that of the established programs offered by their schools, whether they have clearly identified program objectives or not.

## Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to determine what problems or barriers existed to prohibit awarding credit for CETA training in Virginia and to identify potential solutions and strategies for their implementation. The major result of the project was to be a Plan for Action for both CETA and educational leadership to act on the findings of the year-long study. Specifically, this study sought to: (a) determine the current status of award of academic credit for CETA training in Virginia, (and throughout the nation for purposes of comparison); (b) identify problems or barriers which exist to impair or restrict efforts to award academic credit for CETA training, in general and in Virginia; (c) select prospective solutions to those problems and strategies for their implementation which were especially applicable in Virginia; and (d) integrate the findings from the above steps into a Plan for Action that presents leaders in both CETA and educational settings with activities which, if pursued, would result in substantially increased awarding of academic credit for CETA training in Virginia.

## Data Collection

The project team employed a variety of methods for obtaining the information required to produce the plan. Included were a national survey, an extensive literature review, a major statewide workshop involving CETA and educational leaders, and numerous site visitations involving CETA training activities at both the secondary and post-secondary levels. While the most complete information came from the statewide workshop, every other aspect of the study provided essential information to fill in gaps; therefore, no single source of information employed by the project team would have been sufficient.

The project staff initiated the study with a literature review of scholarly publications, catalogs, regulations and policies relating to the issue of award-

ing credit for CETA training. An ERIC search was made using such descriptors as prior learning, prior experience, work experience and academic credit, school and industry relationship, work experience programs, and awarding credit for extra-institutional learning. Some sixty-five abstracts were reviewed and publications from various sources were procured for review by the project staff. A national guide published by American Council on Education's Office on Educational Credit and materials developed by The National Center for Research in Vocational Education at The Ohio State University provided significant background information and discussion concerning the focus of the project. In addition, certain state departments of education which had previously explored the topic of awarding credit for CETA training made available their publications and reports describing similar research efforts. Most notable among the reports and assistance from states were those from the Division of Special Services of the State of Minnesota Department of Education, (see Bibliography).

A national survey instrument was developed by the project staff as a means of identifying institutions that had in place implementation strategies for awarding credit for CETA training. The survey questionnaire was mailed to presidents of all public two year colleges, all state directors of vocational education and supervisors of comprehensive and employment training in the United States. The survey was designed to determine the "state of the art" in terms of discovering how pervasive was the practice of awarding credit for CETA training. Response rates from the presidents of community colleges, 46.63 percent, and the directors of vocational education at the state level, 55.17 percent, were very encouraging. However, less than 20 percent of the directors of the Governors' Employment and Training Councils responded. That low response rate was determined to be an insufficient return to serve as the basis for any significant observations. The survey revealed that 79.4 percent of the community colleges

do grant credit for CETA courses offered as a part of the regular curriculum although it indicated that as little as 5.97 percent awarded credit for CETA training sponsored by agencies outside of the community college system. In addition to providing information which was helpful in determining sites that could be later investigated for potentially successful approaches to the critical issue of awarding credit for CETA training, individuals were identified as presentors and resource persons for the subsequent conference with practitioners.

A conference of practitioners which focused on the issue of awarding credit for CETA training was held in February 1980, in Richmond. Eighty-five participants, representing CETA, public school divisions, community colleges, proprietary schools, the Virginia Community College System, the Virginia Department of Education, the Governor's Employment and Training Council, and Virginia Tech attended the conference. In addition to the presentations made by the three national experts, a panel representing CETA, proprietary schools, secondary schools, and community colleges discussed the problems associated with the awarding of credit for CETA training from their respective points of view. The conference featured small group discussion sessions in order to get practitioners from all levels to identify problems, solutions, and strategies with regard to the issue of awarding credit for CETA training. The conference, particularly the small group discussions, developed what became the core information for the project and primary base for this Plan of Action.

An excellent source of information for the project was the series of on-site visits around the Commonwealth. Sixteen formal visits were made to eight local school systems and eight community colleges. The visitations were conducted with such personnel as community college presidents, deans of instruction, directors of divisions, local directors of vocational education,

coordinators of CETA and co-op programs, skill center directors, youth planners and other local school personnel working with CETA programs. The purpose of the on-site visits was to ascertain the kinds of CETA training activities being conducted, the linkage with the educational agency, funding and administrative procedures and whether or not credit was being granted. If credit was being granted, a discussion of problems and how they had been overcome in that particular setting was the major thrust of the visit. Another purpose of the on-site visits was to discuss problems and solutions identified as of that date to determine the potential for their implementation and success. The information provided through the on-site field visits was very comprehensive and served as a key resource for this study. In addition to the 16 on-site visits, numerous phone conversations were held by the project staff with many other local school, community college, CETA, and state department personnel regarding the credit issue. Such discussions served as resources to help determine visitation sites and contact personnel as well as providing vital information regarding the concerns, problems, and issues relating to credit for CETA programs.

Another resource for this study was the national convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges during which time the project staff held a meeting with community college presidents and deans from many states who had expressed an interest in the credit issue through the national survey. During the two hour session, those in attendance expressed how they were handling CETA at their institutions and the concerns they had regarding funds, credit, and administration of such programs. This opportunity was very beneficial in providing a greater understanding of the national scene. During the conference week, three out-of-state community colleges were also visited to gain further understanding of how CETA is being handled in other states.

## Chapter II

## PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS: AWARDING ACADEMIC CREDIT

From the onset of the study, it was evident that there were many obstacles to awarding credit, but it was equally evident that those problems could be categorized under a few major topics such as funding, administration, attitudes, and communications. The first listings of problems seemed overwhelming until careful study revealed that numerous problems had no direct effect on the awarding of credit but only had impact in the general sense of setting the environment for cooperation. Initial lists separated secondary and post-secondary problems and concerns; however, comparison and integration of those lists permitted the combining of most problems under a category common to both levels, with very little remaining in the separate listings.

This chapter reports the problems and suggested solutions first for those with indirect impact and then, in much greater detail, those viewed as having very direct impact on awarding credit for CETA training. Most of the problems and their potential solutions are discussed as common to both secondary and post-secondary settings. Discussion of the problems which were unique to the setting is included in separate sections.

### Problems With Indirect Impact on Awarding of Credit

Many of the problems or issues identified in the literature, by the conference participants, and during site visits were clearly barriers to the development of interrelationships between CETA and educational institutions and agencies but were not direct obstacles to the awarding of educational credit for CETA programs other than in a general sense. Rather than omit discussion of those issues and create an image that they were not identified through the

various stages of the project, they are treated here, separately from the more thorough discussion of the issues and problems directly affecting the matter of awarding of credit.

The issues or problems to be discussed in this section are those that seem to discourage interchange between CETA agencies and educational institutions and agencies. The resulting failure of educators to seek CETA grants to establish training programs, of either agency to articulate program offerings with each other, or of representatives to discuss mutual concerns or goals may not be directly related to the awarding of credit issue but creates an environment that is not conducive to the kind of cooperation that will be essential for much success in this arena. The general issues uncovered during the course of this investigation which were deemed to have indirect impact can be organized under four broad categories: (a) attitudes, (b) communication, (c) funding, and (d) administration.

Problems of attitude that directly impact the major thrust of this project will be discussed later, but among educators and a few others involved in the various stages of the study, it was evident that there were feelings of mistrust or wariness regarding CETA programs in general. Expressions of personal doubt about the value and appropriateness of CETA were added to expressions of hesitancy about programs which are held in low regard by key leadership in the legislative and executive branches of state government. There was evidence that schools and colleges were often reluctant to pursue linkages with CETA because of CETA's reputation; those that did become involved were hampered, if not harrassed, because of their liaison.

Few who complained about CETA's image could offer anything than hearsay or rumor and it became evident when pressed that those individuals who were most outspoken had little or no basis for their biases. However, it seemed clear

that CETA's image needed improvement even if there existed no substantive basis for the criticism or concerns expressed. While the early days of CETA legislation encouraged CETA training separate from existing educational systems, current linkage efforts demand development of close-working relationships and a "public relations" effort by CETA agency personnel. Of course, establishment of strong working relationships between agencies will result in an improved image and create an environment that encourages further development of agreements between the agencies.

Communications problems so completely permeate every organization and agency that it is worthwhile to discuss those identified in this project so that specific actions might be suggested to alleviate some of them. There was general agreement among conference participants and some confirmation during site visitations that there has been just too little contact between educators and CETA agency personnel. Not only have major issues not been discussed or disagreements aired, in many areas representatives of CETA and education do not even know each other. Such lack of communication allows distrust to grow and hinder any future communication efforts.

It seems important that efforts be made to include community college, public school, and proprietary school personnel on Area Manpower Planning Councils to insure input from those agencies in the planning and eventual distribution of CETA resources. Equally valuable would be the inclusion of CETA personnel on advisory committees and councils for community colleges, vocational education, and so forth. Beyond formal arrangements to foster communication between representatives of the various agencies, informal meetings and visitations should become frequent occurrences between CETA and educational representatives. Both sides will need to make overt efforts to increase both formal and informal contacts.

Funding obstacles were those most frequently mentioned by representatives of the various agencies participating in the conference and contacted during site visitations. Only one of the funding issues identified was directly related to the award of academic credit and that issue will be discussed later. Other funding issues were only indirectly related to the major thrust of this project but were considered to be serious barriers by the many persons who described them. Perhaps the most common concern was related to the differences in fiscal years and academic years and the concomitant necessity to operate programs with starting and ending dates which differ from those of regular programs. Educators also expressed concern about the short notice of funding which frequently left too little time between notification and program initiation to effectively hire staff, equip shops, and develop programs. Also of considerable concern was the perceived instability of CETA funding. It was felt that specific program funding might be short-lived due to shifts in unemployment rates or other local reasons and that even on a national level CETA funding was uncertain. A small number of secondary school representatives were reluctant to work with programs that might create inequities for students as CETA participants qualified for allowance payments and others did not. A few CETA personnel expressed concern that educators often sought CETA funds as a source of dollars for reasons other than providing intended services to CETA clients.

All of the aforementioned funding problems, whether real or imagined, should be addressed as a part of a major effort to improve relationships between various participating agencies. While alleviating these problems will not bring about credit for CETA training, it may help create an environment that permits development of required agreements and arrangements for awarding credit. The differences in fiscal years and academic years can become minor issues with forward funding and the ability to plan ahead and carry funds over between

fiscal years. All responsible agencies should continue to press for congressional and executive branch commitments to forward funding; however, in the meantime, many school systems and colleges currently operate successful programs with no major difficulties created by calendar differences. CETA funding procedures should be studied with an eye toward streamlining the award and notification process to permit maximum possible time between notification of award and program start up dates. In the meantime, agencies seeking CETA funding should be cognizant of the potential for short start up time and prepare accordingly. The record for CETA funding does not merit the label of being unstable; however, it is important for CETA personnel to communicate that information to educational agencies and other potential grantees to eliminate much of the hesitancy resulting from false impressions. The perceived problem of inequities between CETA students who qualify for allowances and students in the same curriculum who don't receive those allowances should not hinder schools from developing CETA training, especially if CETA goals and purposes are more clearly communicated to school personnel. Development of close communication links described earlier should be a significant factor in solving this problem. Many school systems are having no difficulty in this area. As to the suspicion of CETA personnel regarding the motives of educators seeking CETA funding, the same effort to improve communications should aid in the solution of this problem and as schools become more involved in providing and recognizing CETA training, each side will view the other more positively.

Administration or management made up the fourth general area of problems and issues. Educators and CETA personnel alike identified the lack of open-entry and open-exit arrangements in the public schools, and to some extent, the proprietary schools and community colleges. The full year in class to gain credits and the fixed start and stop dates for most institutions did not accom-

modate many CETA training programs with requirements for more flexible scheduling. Educators were in agreement that whatever the mode of program delivery, intact programs or individual referrals, CETA students frequently required more time of counselors, teachers, and administrators. The extra demand on already strained personnel resources was seen as a hindrance to becoming involved with any CETA training program. Everchanging regulations and different audit standards created additional problems for program administrators and added to the reasons why schools and colleges were generally unwilling to seek CETA grants or to expand existing efforts, at least beyond individual referrals.

Again, whether the problems listed under administration were real or imagined they were seen as factors that limited the development of CETA and educational linkages. Therefore, they had at least an indirect impact on the awarding of credit for CETA training. As the Competency Based Education effort already begun in Virginia's schools and community colleges spreads throughout the Commonwealth, some degree of open-entry/open-exit arrangement may become available. However, it does not seem likely that any major breakthrough will be commonplace soon. Colleges and schools will need to work closely with CETA personnel in the design of programs that do much more directly with traditional educational programs at the same time efforts are made to provide greater flexibility in the future. CETA funding does permit the hiring of additional counselors and other noninstructional personnel to provide support services for students in CETA training programs. Schools and colleges, therefore, should be less hesitant to seek programs in the future as that information is made clear to potential grantees. While regulations were seen as being changed from year to year, many of those changes were viewed as favorable or needed by institutional administrators. Also, the frequency of changes in CETA regulations were described as about the same as those in many other funded programs. Many col-

leges and schools throughout the Commonwealth have adapted to those changes and developed successful programs. Others will need to make the same adjustments if they are to become involved in CETA training because it does not seem likely that we will eliminate the phenomenon of change that permeates most federally-funded programs.

The general problems and issues discussed in this section, while having no direct impact on the specific decision to withhold or award credit for CETA training do restrain efforts to develop educational linkages in CETA programming. They cannot be ignored without leaving them as obstacles to achievements in the award of credit. However, many of these barriers can be eliminated or bypassed through improved communication between representatives of the various CETA agencies and educational institutions and agencies at both state and local levels. That effort must be made by leadership from both sides if major changes are to be accomplished.

## Problems Having Direct Impact on Awarding Credit

Many problems were identified through the literature, by the conference participants and the discussions at the many site visits that very clearly affect the awarding of credit for CETA programs. The following discussion includes those problems along with potential solutions that were identified throughout the various phases of the project. The problems that appear to have the greatest impact can be organized into the following categories of: (a) authority and curriculum, (b) funding, (c) administration, (d) attitudes and communications.

### Authority and Curriculum

The area of authority and curriculum includes a number of problems of major concern to both CETA and education personnel. Long and rather tense discussions

took place at the conference as well as during on-site visits regarding such problems and concerns as: (a) authority to grant credit; (b) difficulty in determining equivalency of achievement due to unclear objectives, standards, quality control, and records; (c) differences in teacher certification and facilities; and (d) failure to recognize alternative educational programs.

Authority to Grant Credit. The question of who has the authority to grant academic credit was an issue of major concern for many of the conference participants. In this country, the awarding of academic credit has traditionally been the prerogative of the recognized educational institutions and agencies. As alternative educational programs were developed for which academic credit was desired, it became necessary for managers of those programs to seek recognition within the traditionally recognized educational agencies. CETA programs existing outside of the recognized schools and colleges are subject to approval by those agencies to become acceptable for credit.

CETA training programs operated in settings outside the recognized public and private schools and colleges may be recognized for academic credit. While not easily attained, such recognition can be achieved through concerted efforts of both CETA and educational leadership. Joint advisory committees should be established to address the issues of credit, develop agreements to coordinate CETA training programs with local educational agencies, and seek recognition for academic credit for appropriate CETA programs.

Difficulty in Determining Equivalency. Equivalency of learning is extremely difficult to assess unless there exist very clear objectives, standards, quality control procedures, and records of achievement. The whole question of determining what has been learned in a CETA program for which a person can be given recognition or some form of credit toward another program was expressed by many as a major stumbling block to this credit issue.

One of the specific problems in trying to assess what students have learned for which credit can be given relates to the pressing need for clearly defined objectives and standards for each training program. Many of the CETA training programs and traditional vocational education programs do not have learning objectives and standards clearly identified and stated. The lack of such objectives and standards makes it almost impossible to compare programs or students' achievement to determine any sort of equivalency for awarding credit. Additionally, there has been little evidence of quality control procedures that assured achievement of generally defined objectives and standards. Lastly, many programs have maintained inadequate records to document student achievement in courses or programs.

Observations during site visits have reflected these inadequacies in both school and nonschool settings. Educators, however, have been extremely critical of nonschool based CETA programs for not maintaining grades indicating level of learning and keeping track only of hours of attendance rather than clear reflections of what students have learned.

The solution to this very real problem of insufficient information on which to base credit determinations is to create a system that assures adequate data and records. The competency based education (CBE) movement with several models throughout Virginia appears to be an excellent approach to resolving this difficult problem. By intent, CBE includes clearly defined objectives and competencies with established standards of learning and a system for measuring the quality of achievement toward such standards. In addition, the CBE standards adopted by the state call for maintenance of a systematic record of student achievement of competencies.

Through the adoption of the CBE format by both vocational educators and CETA training personnel, learning that has taken place in a CETA program can

more readily be assessed. Also, credit toward a given vocational education program at either the high school or college level can be granted for competencies previously mastered. In fact, programs can be designed at the outset to match credit-earning sets of competencies. In addition to having clear objectives and standards, the system for assessment of student achievement and the maintenance of records for those achievements will be invaluable in the determination of equivalency and awarding of academic credit. Such a record can be of value for employment purposes as future employers can determine the competencies possessed by graduates of each program.

Differences in Teacher Certification and Facilities. Many educators have complained that the quality of instruction in numerous CETA programs has been inferior purely on the grounds that the CETA instructors did not have the same professional preparation as their counterparts in educational settings. Even though certification or employment standards are minimal for both secondary and post-secondary institutions in terms of degrees or pedagogical preparation, there are overt efforts to cause those hired to develop instructional skills to accompany proven trade skills. Educators, particularly those at policy making levels question the general ability of those instructors hired by nonschool CETA programs to provide equivalent instruction and to assess student achievement accurately enough to provide a base for awarding credit. It should be noted that many CETA programs have employed instructors who met and exceeded the certification standards and records of employment successes of their counterparts in schools and colleges.

In addition to concerns about the quality of instructional staff, educators have questioned many CETA training programs because of seemingly inadequate facilities and equipment. Certainly many of the programs have been housed in

facilities and had access to equipment that fell short of established standards for vocational education facilities. In some cases, they have exceeded the standards in every category.

Standards for certification of teachers and approval of facilities and equipment are important measures of quality for programs without established objectives and standards of student achievement. Once an institution can demonstrate student successes in accepted terms and based on measurable results, then the activity or environment becomes less applicable as a measure of program quality. In the past, and for most schools for the present, educators have had difficulty demonstrating success or quality except through dollars spent, facilities and equipment used, and teachers employed. The movement to competency based education, with clearly articulated programs between educational settings and nonschool based CETA programs, should remove teacher certification, and equipment as barriers to awarding of credit, except where those actually affect student achievement of agreed upon objectives and standards.

Failure to Recognize Alternative Educational Programs. A genuine concern was expressed about the recognition and encouragement of alternative programs for those who fail to benefit from the programs of the established public and private educational agencies. Suspicions about the costs of such programs and the quality of their instruction were the primary objections raised in the face of growing interests in creation of alternative educational efforts, including CETA training programs. The programs do exist, however, and there were numerous instances of those programs not being accepted for academic credit. For example, six CETA skill centers are delivering post-secondary occupational programs supported by CETA funds. In the same regions community colleges provide similar post-secondary vocational programs for which students earn academic credit. One of the six centers is working very closely with the regional com-

munity college to articulate its machine shop and secretarial training programs with the comparable community college programs. CETA students will be able to move to the community college and receive credit for competencies already learned. The remaining skill centers and many other CETA programs throughout the Commonwealth are making little or no effort to articulate their programs and gain recognition for credit with the community colleges.

CETA centers and community colleges can create excellent opportunities for students by developing articulated arrangements which capitalize on the strengths of each program. The CETA centers can begin to articulate their programs by establishing mutually agreed upon objectives, standards, and recording systems to permit students to move to the community colleges with credit and advanced placement. Community colleges would then gain the advantage of being able to attract successful students from the CETA program with an investment in a certificate or degree program.

Funding

Funding problems identified throughout the various stages of the project were, as described earlier, generally only indirect influences on the issue of awarding credit. However, there was one major barrier created by funding policies that had a significant impact on the post-secondary schools and their ability to grant credit for CETA training offered within their own institutions. While a number of community colleges had discovered a workable solution for the problem, others were still struggling with the issues. If colleges accept CETA grants that cover all program costs, including instruction and administration, and also count the students within the program as part of their enrollments for state funding, they are accused of "double dipping". Yet, if they do not count those students the colleges are not credited with space utilization, faculty load, and the other measures of productivity. In addition, there is no long-

term gain to the colleges in terms of projection of growth and development to balance the costs of working with these "add-on" programs.

Initially, colleges sought the full cost grants because that seemed to be the most, if not the only, acceptable mode, especially since early CETA programs within community colleges were not for credit. Later many colleges began to identify CETA as just one of many student resources, such as other financial aid programs. Rather than seek grants to provide special programs for CETA students, these colleges sought to integrate the CETA students into ongoing credit programs and charge only the current tuition. CETA students then were treated just like any other citizens who merit the availability of community college programs. As colleges with large contingents of CETA students recognized additional adminstrative or support service demands resulting from the unique needs of those students, they sought and obtained small grants to hire personnel who could serve those specific needs. Those colleges now provide both individual referral and intact programs for CETA students as an integrated effort in their ongoing academic programs. Credit for those CETA training programs is awarded to those students as they complete established courses and programs of study.

The resolution of the funding problems as implemented by those colleges seems to be the most acceptable and appropriate use of CETA funds for programs at the collegiate level. With these procedures credit is awarded where appropriate, "double dipping" is avoided, funds are available for required additional services, students are more fully integrated into the total educational program, and graduates are equal to non-CETA students in terms of all benefits of the degree or certification earned.

Administration

There were a few problems which seemed clearly related to issues of administration or management of institutions and which restrict the willingness

of educational agencies or institutions to grant credit for CETA training programs. Those problems related to length of CETA programs as opposed to normally recognized class time requirements, admissions standards and awarding credit to substandard students, and the potential loss of students to alternative programs if those programs are recognized for credit.

Time in Programs. Even though educators have generally accepted the notion that the time in class is not the most important determinant of whether students learn and that clearly defined objectives and diverse modes of individualized instruction can permit students to proceed at their own rates, tradition, administrative simplicity, and other similar forces cause school and colleges to cling to the Carnegie Unit and other standards for required time in class. Accrediting standards for educational institutions make it difficult to demonstrate merit in programs that permit students to complete requirements before the appointed time. Those same standards inhibit efforts by an institution to recognize programs outside its control unless the institution's own standards are met or exceeded.

Identification and establishment of clearly defined course objectives and standards of achievement holds the greatest promise for solution of this problem. As CETA program directors are able to demonstrate student achievements in clear and specific terms, managers of traditional institutions will find granting of credit for those programs more palatable within their own setting and easier to justify to such external agencies as accrediting associations.

Admissions Standards. Despite the open door admissions policies of community colleges and many proprietary schools and essentially no admissions standards for similar programs in secondary schools, many educators were troubled about the seemingly poor quality of students normally found in CETA programs. They were concerned about lowered standards of work in programs and

subsequent lessening of quality of ongoing programs or of the impact on the reputation of the institutions, especially if academic credit was awarded. The very intent and nature of CETA training results is to attract participants who were oftentimes unsuccessful in previous school settings and give them opportunities to succeed in programs where standards are not lowered.

Establishment of objectives and standards as described in earlier sections will allow schools and colleges to ascertain when students have achieved at specified levels without regard to admissions standards for those students. Additionally, those institutions will be able to salvage their reputations by demonstrating that all graduates, CETA funded or not, have achieved required objectives and that the standards of the institution are intact. An important caveat however, is that each school or college must assure that it houses the faculty and programs necessary to give those students the opportunitites to succeed, including developmental/remedial assistance.

Loss of Students. School and college administrators are cognizant of the prospects for declining school enrollments and commensurate declines in resources. They are wary of any action that might exacerbate that problem, including recognition of alternative, nonschool based programs, especially to the extent that those programs might attract students away from traditional settings. Students certainly are more apt to choose alternative programs if the benefits seem equal or better than those offered by the college or school. However, withholding credit for such self-serving purposes is both unethical and shortsighted.

Schools and colleges are beginning to see potential value in alternative programs. With well developed objectives and standards permitting creation of well defined articulation agreements, many schools and colleges can demonstrate to successful students in the alternative programs how they may advance place,

with credit, into degree or diploma programs and continue their education even further. The nonschool program may have attracted or retained students who would have been unreachable by traditional school programs and given them sufficient academic achievement to serve as incentive to continue their education in a traditional setting. The potential for such success is dependent upon closely articulated efforts between schools and colleges and the CETA training programs.

Attitudes and Communications

While general attitudes about CETA have been discussed as an indirect problem inhibiting educators from accepting CETA training, there is another aspect of attitudes about CETA and the worthiness of their programs that directly affects the awarding of credit. Due to a negative reputation that CETA has suffered among many educators, those who are willing to become involved with CETA training still have great difficulty convincing policy makers, peers, and others regarding the awarding of credit for such training. Because of negative feelings and attitudes that many educators harbor toward CETA activities, there has been too little effort to communicate between agencies and bridge the gaps that seem to be so prevalent.

Educators and CETA personnel need to join together through manpower training councils and advisory committees to resolve these misunderstandings and differences. It was noted during the site visits that there were scattered locations where personnel representing schools, colleges, and CETA were working together. In those locations communication was improved and attitudinal barriers were diminished. Educators are starting to see the merits of CETA activities and changing their attitudes toward CETA programs. Through joint communication efforts and cooperation, articulated programs can be established. Program objectives and standards for credit can be agreed upon and arrangements for

awarding educational credit for CETA training can be developed. The next chapter includes recommendations in the form of a plan of action that can be implemented to enhance the awarding of credit for such training in Virginia.

# Chapter III

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: A PLAN OF ACTION

Awarding educational credit for CETA training is a concept accepted by many, including authors in the field, participants involved in the statewide conference, and persons interviewed during the numerous site visitations. It was generally accepted that while not all such training merits educational credit and that while some credit, secondary and post-secondary, was being awarded for CETA training, in many school and nonschool settings there existed numerous examples of noncredit CETA training for which credit was merited. Of special interest to participants in the various stages of this project were training programs with classroom and laboratory instruction. Credit for on-the-job training or work experience was not suggested as a significant problem. It was also generally agreed upon that the obstacles to major changes and subsequent awarding of credit on a large scale basis were many and complex but could be overcome with careful planning and concerted efforts by educators and CETA leadership.

There were many problems that were identified through the various stages of the project, some of which were only indirectly related to the issue of awarding credit while others were viewed as distinct and direct barriers. Problems with indirect impact were organized under four broad categories: (a) attitudes; (b) communication; (c) funding; and (d) administration. The problems with indirect impact included attitudes that were generally negative toward CETA and its potential and problems of communication that emanated from a sense of competition between agencies. Also affecting the general willingness of educators to become involved with CETA programs were a variety of funding problems such as

insufficient notification for the awarding of grants, instability of CETA as a funding source, and differences between fiscal year and academic year calendars. These and many other issues described in Chapter Two have little direct impact on decisions to withhold or award academic credit for established CETA programs, but they clearly affect the environment for communication between colleges and schools and the various CETA agencies and offices. Some effort to solve or at least soften these indirect barriers is an essential step toward the resolution of the more direct and substantial problems.

In addition to the set of problems with indirect impact on awarding credit, the same sources identified issues or problems that stand as direct barriers to awarding credit. Those problems which were viewed as having direct impact were categorized under the broad topics of: (a) authority and curriculum, (b) funding, (c) administration, and (d) attitudes and communication. These problems having direct impact included: difficulty with the monopoly of authority to grant credit held by traditional educational agencies, difficulty determining equivalency (what and how much credit to award), differences in teacher certification, and differences in standards for instructional facilities. Also included was one major funding problem that had been resolved by a handful of community colleges and a set of administrative problems relating to admission standards, time required in class for credit, and concerns with declining enrollments and potential loss of students to alternative programs that are recognized for credit. Additional problems with direct impact arise from attitudes held by key leadership in both CETA and educational agencies and lack of effective communication links between agencies.

There is no question that resolution of many of the problems uncovered by this project is feasible and that much can be done to improve linkages between CETA and the schools and colleges resulting in vastly increased awarding of

credit for programs which merit that credit. Leadership from both the CETA and educational sectors can play effective roles in resolving many of these problems and their work can begin either with joint efforts or unilateral attempts to remove these barriers. Either effort can be effective in removing communication and attitudinal problems and improving the climate for more substantial activity to follow.

In addition to the identification of problems, efforts were concentrated on the identification of potential solutions to those problems and strategies for implementing those solutions. Again, the literature review, national survey, statewide conference, and site visitations were all sources of suggestions for resolving the various problems identified earlier. The many suggestions were "tested" in discussions with practitioners during site visitations to determine their potential applicability and efficacy in Virginia. Results of those efforts became the basis for a series of recommendations that form the Plan of Action for improving the awarding of academic credit for CETA training in Virginia.

## Recommendations: A Plan of Action

Rather than leading to specific suggestions or guidelines for action, the findings of this study led to a set of more generalized recommendations. The findings included "success stories" with various modes of operation, suggesting more than one solution to many of the problems. Before significant detailed and uniform action can be accomplished, numerous problems of a general nature must be resolved. The following recommendations are organized under the two broad categories of state level actions and local actions. State level actions are suggested as means for attacking the most generalized problems, developing guidelines, and providing a clearinghouse for information about successes in the field.

Local actions are suggested for colleges, schools, and CETA agencies to work on specific problems and implement procedures that will bring about more immediate results in the local settings.

Recommendations for State Level Actions:

1. The Executive Director of the Governor's Employment and Training Council should take action to invite the State Superintendent for Public Instruction and the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System to join him in establishing an Executive Committee to give emphasis and overall guidance to statewide efforts to expand the awarding of credit for appropriate CETA training.

2. The Executive Committee should identify and appoint a State Advisory Committee composed of representatives from local school systems, community colleges, proprietary schools, CETA training centers, and prime sponsors, to advise the Executive Committee, recommend specific guidelines for awarding credit, and provide a clearinghouse for information about problems, issues, and successes that arise as local institutions and agencies implement policies and programs for awarding credit.

3. The Executive Committee should take action based on information and advice provided by the Advisory Committee to improve the image of CETA training throughout the Commonwealth through public acclaim and recognition of student achievements and program successes.

4. The Executive Committee snould study the specific problem areas in funding and administration and take action to urge appropriate federal agencies and offices to provide streamlined procedures to ameliorate problems growing from insufficient notice of grant awards and lack of forward funding.

5. The Executive Committee should press local schools, colleges, and CETA agencies to develop closer ties, especially through joint involvement on various

advisory committees and councils and inclusion of CETA training centers in the current state projects for articulation and competency based education.

6. The Executive Committee should work toward the development of guidelines for qualifications of instructors and type and quality of facilities and equipment for CETA training programs that can be agreed upon as meeting minimum requirements for credit earning programs.

7. The Executive Committee should work to establish mutually acceptable guidelines for awarding credit for work experience, particularly that provided under the auspices of CETA programs.

8. The Executive Committee should investigate the feasibility of establishing procedures for "accrediting" nonschool based training programs so that statewide recognition of credit granted to the students in those programs can be accomplished.

Recommendations for Local Level Actions:

1. Community college presidents, school superintendents, heads of proprietary institutions, and CETA administrators should take immediate action to establish or improve communication linkages by appointing representatives of each agency to appropriate committees and councils or otherwise create formal and informal networks to improve professional contacts between the various institutions and agencies.

2. These same leaders should take action to improve the image of CETA training within their own communities through use of media to publicize successful programs and graduates.

3. Community college leaders should identify the actual additional costs of services required for CETA students to provide the basis for requesting CETA funding and, insofar as possible, should include CETA students in the regular tuition-paying and credit-earning student body whether as individual referrals or as intact program students.

4. Leaders in colleges and schools should recognize the responsibility associated with their monopoly on the awarding of academic credit, to include not only guarding against awarding credit where it is not merited but also the granting of credit for nonschool learning experiences when it is warranted, and take action to identify and "accredit" appropriate learning experiences within their districts or areas.

5. Local college and school personnel who are involved in the ongoing Articulation or Competency Based Education projects should take immediate action to include personnel from regional CETA training centers and other CETA agency personnel in those project efforts as a first step toward the development of mutually agreed upon instructional objectives, achievement standards, and modes of record keeping to permit accurate determination of equivalency of student achievement for awarding credit.

6. Leaders in colleges and schools should develop clear criteria for awarding credit, other than the number of hours students remain in classrooms, so that credit can be awarded for alternative educational modes and subsequently justified to regulatory and accrediting agencies.

7. Local CETA leadership should work to ensure that high quality instructional personnel and well equipped instruction facilities are used in CETA training programs while developing clear objectives and achievement standards that will eventually allow the awarding of credit based on the merit of student achievement.

8. College and school leaders should continue to evaluate alternatives to traditional school settings and programs, including CETA training, as a viable means for encouraging retention of students performing poorly in the traditional environment.

9. School and college personnel should evaluate the impact of recognized alternative programs, such as CETA, which have been carefully articulated with regular school programs to determine whether enrollment gains from students who transfer into the regular program with advance placement, equal or exceed the losses represented by students who choose the alternative over a traditional program.

10. Inservice training on competency based education should be required for CETA training program personnel, as well as educational personnel to lead to improved articulation of objectives and ease of determining equivalency of programs and student achievement.

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